

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TUNIS 04465 011340Z

51

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ADP-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15 RSR-01 /136 W

----- 108936

R 011230Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2743

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 4465

DEPT PASS CAIRO

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XF, TS

SUBJECT: BOURGUIBA INITIATIVE

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA'S CLOSE ADVISER HABIB CHATTI CONFIRMED TO US THAT MIDDLE EAST "INITIATIVE" NOW FROZEN, WITH LITTLE HOPE FURTHER PROGRESS IN IMMEDIATE FUTURE. ALSO ASSERTED THAT PALESTINIANS PRIVATELY SUPPORT BOURGUIBA'S POSITION ON PALESTINIAN STATE. CHATTI GENERALLY PESSIMISTIC ON MIDDLE EAST, AND CRITICAL OF U.S. SECURITY COUNCIL VETO. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING MEETING WITH HABIB CHATTI (BOURGUIBA'S DIRECTEUR DE CABINET) ON JULY 31, DCM RAISED STATUS OF BOURGUIBA INITIATIVE ON MIDDLE EAST. CHATTI SAID INITIATIVE "FROZEN" AND THERE SEEMED LITTLE HOPE FOR PROGRESS IN NEAR FUTURE. HE ADMITTED BOURGUIBA HAD PRE-CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TUNIS 04465 011340Z

CONDITION FOR MEETING, I.E. THAT ISRAEL RECOGNIZE VALIDITY

OF 47 UN DECISION,
AT LEAST AS LEGAL POINT OF DEPARTURE.
BOURGUIBA WAS NOT INTERESTED IN A MEETING WITH MRS. MEIR
SIMPLY TO HAVE MEETING. IN CONTRAST, ISRAELIS ONLY WANTED
MEETING FOR MEETING'S SAKE TO SHOW WILLINGNESS TO TALK
WITH ARAB LEADER.

3. CHATTI REVIEWED HISTORICAL ORIGINS OF JORDANIAN STATE
AND DEFENDED BOURGUIBA'S "REALISTIC POSITION."

4. CONTRARY TO RUMORS, HE SAID HE HAD NOT REPEAT NOT
SEEN ARAFAT DURING HIS LONG ABSENCE FROM TUNISIA. TUNISIANS
HAD BEEN IN TOUCH HOWEVER WITH PLO REPRESENTATIVE IN GENEVA
IN PRESENCE OTHER ARAB AMBASSADORS. HE SAID PALESTINIANS
GENERALLY AGREED WITH SOUNDNESS OF BOURGUIBA'S POSITION ON
PALESTINE STATE, BUT WILL NOT SAY SO PUBLICLY. PLO DOES
NOT BELIEVE ANY PURPOSE WOULD BE SERVED IN MAKING
CONCESSIONS IN ADVANCE, AND THEREFORE PREFER TO STICK
WITH BINATIONAL STATE CONCEPT.

5. CHATTI THEN LAUNCHED INTO LONG AND GLOOMY DIATRIBE
ABOUT MIDDLE EAST. HE SAID HE WAS VERY PESSIMISTIC. U.S.
VETO IN UNSC HAD BEEN MOST UNFORTUNATE. IN CIRCUMSTANCES,
HE COULD SEE NO POSSIBILITY OF PEACE IN MIDDLE EAST UNTIL
EITHER U.S. RECOGNIZES ITS TRUE NATIONAL INTERESTS AND
MODIFIES ITS ALL OUT SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL, OR THERE IS A
CHANGE BROUGHT ABOUT BY NEW GENERATION WITHIN ISRAEL. DCM
STRONGLY DEFENDED U.S. VETO, STRESSING SC RESOLUTION HAD
BEEN UNBALANCED AND BIASED AND, IF PASSED, WOULD HAVE HAD
EFFECT OF COMPLETELY UPSETTING ONLY AGREED BASIS FOR
SETTLEMENT. CHATTI CRITICIZED RES. 242 AS NEVER REFLECTING
BALANCED APPROACH AND ARGUED THAT IN ANY EVENT U.S. POSITION
ON RES. 242 HAD IN FACT CHANGED SINCE 1967, ESPECIALLY ON
INTERPRETATION OF WITHDRAWAL OF OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. HE
ALSO EXPRESSED HOPE AMERICAN PEOPLE WILL BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND
MORAL PROBLEM POSED BY PLIGHT OF PALESTINIANS. AMERICANS
ARE VERY FAIR BUT ARE NOT WELL INFORMED ON PALESTINIAN QUESTION.
AND STILL SEE MORAL PROBLEM LARGELY FROM JEWISH OPTIC OF WORLD
WAR II.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TUNIS 04465 011340Z

6. DCM REBUTTED CHATTI'S CONTENTION THAT U.S. INTERPRETATION
OF RES. 242 HAD CHANGED, AND RECALLED U.S. HAD MADE CLEAR
NEED TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT LEGITIMATE ASPIRATIONS OF
PALESTINIANS. U.S. AGREED MIDDLE EAST SITUATION SERIOUS,
AND FOR THIS REASON NEED TO GET NEGOTIATING PROCESS STARTED.
WE KNOW THIS NOT EASY, BUT RAISING PRECONDITIONS PRIOR TO
NEGOTIATIONS NEVER HELPFUL.

7. COMMENT: CHAIIT WAS IN UNUSUALLY PESSIMISTIC MOOD.
HE MAY HAVE BEEN TAKING THIS GLOOMY POINT OF VIEW FOR OUR
BENEFIT, BUT MAY ALSO BE GENUINELY DISAPPOINTED THAT
BOURGUIBA INITIATIVE HAD NOT SUCCEEDED.

SEELYE

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED CAIRO.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARMISTICE, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, PEACE TALKS, TERRITORIAL CLAIMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 AUG 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973TUNIS04465
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS SEELYE
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: TUNIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730863/aaaabupd.tel
Line Count: 122
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 DEC 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10-Dec-2001 by martinml>; APPROVED <02-Jan-2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BOURGUIBA INITIATIVE
TAGS: PFOR, XF, TS, IS, (BOURGUIBA)
To: n/a
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005